



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

BOBBY JINDAL
GOVERNOR

HAROLD LEGGETT, Ph.D.
SECRETARY

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Contact: Rodney Mallett

Phone: 225-219-3964

DEQ conducting facility and site inspections in the wake of Hurricane Gustav

BATON ROUGE – Since Gustav made landfall, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality has worked with federal, state and local agencies to conduct numerous inspections of various sites throughout the state. These assessments were aimed at sites that could potentially be hazardous to human health and the environment and started shortly after Gustav made landfall.

To date, all major wastewater treatment systems, which are considered to be those discharging 1 million gallons or more per day, have been assessed. Assisting with the inspections were the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals.

Significant minor treatment plants, which are 50,000 gallons to 1 million gallons discharged per day, are nearly completed. More than 770 of the 895 have been inspected by DEQ, the Louisiana Rural Water Association and DHH. The agencies have also worked with the treatment plants on their needs for becoming operational.

The National Guard, the Louisiana State Police and DEQ have inspected all 278 Tier 2 facilities. These are facilities that fall under chemical inventory reporting requirements and were deemed by the agencies as priority sites for inspection even before Gustav made landfall.

Superfund sites were also classified as a priority. DEQ has inspected all 19 Superfund sites in the impacted area and have found no significant affects on human health and the environment.

The National Guard and DEQ have conducted more than 2,060 underground storage tank assessments in the impacted area. While DEQ is sending some assessment teams to some sites that needed follow-up inspections, both agencies have found only minor issues or malfunctions at a minimal amount of sites.

“What we’ve seen since Gustav formed in the Gulf is a total team effort to ensure the safety of the public and the environment,” said DEQ Secretary Hal Leggett. “With the help of our partners, we were able to identify and assess a large number of sites that had the potential to have harmful releases in a relatively quick time frame. Now, we have the resources to put in other priority areas like the wastewater treatment plants and debris management.”